

ACCS Position Statements

Transporting Animals



Every year animals die due to inappropriate transportation methods by air and car. ACCS recommends that animals should not be transported during extremely warm or cold temperatures. When necessary to do so, appropriate measures must be taken to ensure the health and well being of the animal.

When traveling by air, only reputable airlines that have a written policy on animal transportation should be used. Transportation should be scheduled when ambient temperatures are more likely to be within animal health and safety margins. When traveling by car, an animal should be confined within a crate or restrained with a seatbelt. No animal should be transported in the back of a pick up truck or allowed to hang out of a window without being secured. ACCS contends it is cruel and inhumane to keep an animal in a parked vehicle without air-conditioning for any amount of time when outside temperatures represent a risk to the health and well being of the animal.

Wild and Exotic Animals As Pets



ACCS believes most wild and exotic animals do not make suitable pets and that in most instances, ownership of such animals will result in illness or injury to either the animal or their caretaker. Most wild and exotic animals never fully adjust to captivity.

ACCS objects to the capture, transport and selling of wild animals.

ACCS objects to the selling of animals as novelties. The most common example of this practice is the annual sale of baby ducklings, chicks and rabbits in association with the Easter season.

The great majority of animals sold as novelties do not survive for any length of time. Often, they die from starvation and neglect, or as a result of the stress and conditions they experience as part of the distribution process.

ACCS opposes this practice because of the suffering it causes animals and because it encourages children to be insensitive to the real needs and suffering of animals.

Nothing in this policy is meant to criticize those events that provide appropriate screening of an individual's ability to adequately care and provide for a specific animal.

Animals in Biomedical Research and Testing



ACCS is concerned with the quality of life of animals involved in biomedical research and testing, especially as it relates to housing conditions, the research review process, and approval protocols using the animals, the safeguards, and the limited laws in place for adequate protection of animals.

ACCS supports the Humane Society of the United States's (HSUS) position on this complex issue. The following questions should always be asked. Can the proposed use of animals be replaced by non-animal methods that would yield comparable results? If not, can the proposed number of animals be reduced to a minimum without compromising the results? Can the proposed procedure be refined so that any pain, suffering, or deprivation experienced by the animals is minimized without compromising the results? When employed, the principles of replacing, reducing, and refining animal use constitutes a responsible approach to this issue.

ACCS also believes that some experiments should be outlawed regardless of the possibility of alternative approaches. These include experiments that are unnecessary and/or are duplicate studies, scientifically or medically trivial, extremely painful, or otherwise fail to balance scientific aims and the public's concerns for animals.

Study of Live Animals in Elementary/Secondary School Biology



ACCS believes that all Biology classes should focus on an appreciation for animals as living, sentient creatures with an emphasis on normal behavior, life patterns and interaction with normal environment. If a class has a classroom pet it should be housed, maintained and cared for appropriately and incorporated into a regular educational routine.

ACCS opposes the use of animals in school-sponsored or approved experiments, lessons or projects that interfere with the normal health or development of the animal, constitute major manipulation of the animal or the animal's behavior or cause pain, fear, anxiety, or discomfort. Experiments and activities using live animals should be limited to observation of pets, or normal living patterns of wildlife in the wild or appropriate instructional settings.

ACCS believes dissection is unnecessary in primary and secondary schools and students should be given the option of an alternative learning opportunity. A group discussion on a humane ethic should be included in all lessons.

ACCS does not support the use of shelter animals as a prop in educational programs. Any animal that is used should be a trained/owned animal with the temperament and stress level evaluated before the program.

ACCS is opposed to the practice of surrendering impounded animals from public and private shelters for biomedical research. Pound seizure or transfer of ownership to research or training facilities violates our mission and values.

Animal Cruelty



ACCS is against physical and mental cruelty towards any animal. Cruelty takes shape in many forms and prevention and intervention programs are fundamental to our mission.

ACCS believes that violence directed toward animals is in no significant way distinguishable from violence directed at people. ACCS believes that cruelty and violence in all forms are unacceptable and integrally related, and that coincidence and opportunity largely determine the species of the victims.

ACCS is against the intentional killing, maiming or torture of an animal for the purpose of propitiating a deity or for the purpose of an occult or ritual sacrifice. ACCS is opposed to so-called blood sports such as cockfighting, dog fighting, bull fighting, coon-on-a-log, coon-in-a-hole and other spectacles. ACCS contends that these sports are cruel and focus on intentional torture for the purpose of entertainment.

ACCS is against cruelty or exploitation in any legal entertainment venue, event, or sporting activity. This includes but is not limited to circuses, rodeo, donkey basketball, dog/horse racing. ACCS encourages people to attend non-exploitive forms of entertainment.

ACCS contends animal guardians are responsible for ensuring an animal is not in distress caused by mistreatment, tethering, exposure to the elements, extremes of temperature, lack of adequate ventilation or drainage, lack of sanitation, deprivation of proper food or potable water, restraint, restriction of movement, confinement, lack of sufficient exercise space, constrictive gear, injury, illness, physical impairment or parasites. Guardians are to ensure that the wellbeing of the animal is not threatened by a dangerous conditions or circumstances.

Responsible Pet Ownership



ACCS believes that a responsible pet owner treats their pet with the utmost respect and kindness throughout its entire life. Responsible pet ownership begins with the initial decision to add a pet to one's family. An animal should be added to a home for the reason of companionship and not solely for utilitarian purposes (guard dog, pest control, hunting dog, etc.) Advance research should be done to find the correct animal that matches the family's lifestyle. The commitment to adopt an animal should not be taken lightly and should be a commitment for life. ACCS believes the human animal bond is an important relationship and that the saddest thing a family can do is break that bond by turning their animal into an animal shelter. Therefore, all avenues should be explored (behavior programs, housing that allows pets, re-homing, etc.) prior to an animal ever being relinquished to an animal shelter.

ACCS recommends adopting an animal from a reputable animal shelter, rescue group or other animal welfare agency. We are opposed to puppy mills, pet shops that sell animals or any breeding source that produces and sells animals solely for a profit. If a person wants a specific breed that an animal shelter or rescue group cannot provide, an animal should be obtained from only a reputable breeder. A reputable breeder breeds only to better the breed, ensures the integrity of the breed, offers health guarantees, screens their breeding stock for genetic health issues, is willing and able to take back any animal when an owner can no longer keep him, requires spay/neuter of non-breeding animals and helps to rescue the breed.

A responsible pet owner ensures their pet is spayed or neutered, and provides appropriate food, water, veterinary care, training, exercise, socialization, identification and love. ACCS believes that all animals should be licensed and should have appropriate identification, which includes tags and microchips.

A responsible pet owner complies with all legal requirements of pet ownership. The animal is licensed and always kept on a leash or contained when outside. ACCS believes dogs should be kept indoors unless supervised. When left outside dogs should have access to shade, food, and water. Dogs are social animals and need to have regular contact with humans. ACCS believes that cats should be kept indoors at all times to protect them from reproducing, injury, disease, getting lost, and causing a nuisance to the neighborhood.

Responsible pet ownership follows through to the end of an animal's life. At this time, ACCS believes an animal deserves a humane, quick death by lethal injection only. ACCS does not support any other method of euthanasia.

Assistance Animals

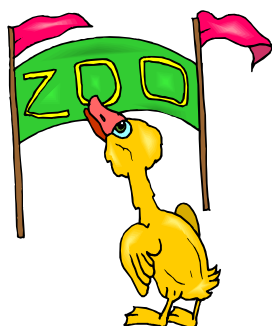



ACCS recognizes that certain animals help certain special needs individuals lead more independent lives by assisting them in the performance of necessary tasks or by acting as a buffer for loneliness or depression. These animals include guide dogs, hearing-assistance animals, resident pets at skilled nursing facilities, and animal assisted therapy and activities.

ACCS believes that for such a relationship to work the needs of both the human and animal have to be accommodated. The training of such animals must be based upon positive reinforcement and not utilize coercive or abuse techniques (e.g. striking, food deprivation, choking, electric shock).

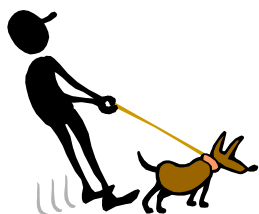
Only medically and behaviorally screened animals should be used in any animal assisted therapy or activities program.

Zoos and Aquaria



ACCS believes that the wild habitat and supports  proper place for wild animals is in their natural efforts to protect both wilderness and native species of fauna and flora. ACCS recognizes that there is a spectrum of facilities that house wild animals. ACCS believes that any facility that houses wild animals should do so for the following purposes; education, conservation, rehabilitation, or a sanctuary for injured or abused animals. ACCS believes that all facilities should put the animals welfare and needs over the publics entertainment wishes and that every effort should be made to ensure the housing of the animal is as natural as possible.

Training and Behavioral Modification



ACCS believes that a well trained pet is a happier pet which leads to a happier owner. Often untrained animals are subject to neglect and abandonment. ACCS supports humane behavioral modification and dog-training programs that adhere to the most humane and up-to-date methods of training. All training methods should be non-invasive and free of physical abuse, adhering to positive reinforcement techniques based on the natural behaviors of the animal. ACCS condemns any training method that is based on coercive or abusive techniques.

Cosmetic Surgery on Animals



ACCS is against any unnecessary surgical procedure on animals when such a procedure is performed solely for the convenience or pleasure of the animal's owner. This includes declawing cats, cropping ears, and docking tails. If a veterinarian feels that any of the above need to be performed for the safety or health of the animal then the procedure must be performed in the most humane manner possible.

ACCS is also against any behavior that puts undue stress or pain on an animal for the purpose of human pleasure i.e.; dying an animal for decoration, ear piercing and other invasive procedures.



Fur as Garments or other Luxury Animal Products

ACCS believes that trapping, raising and killing animals for luxury fur garments, trinkets or novelties) is a source of significant animal pain and suffering and so opposes these practices. ACCS encourages individuals to engage in non-lethal forms of entertainment.

Feral Cats and Colonies



ACCS advocates a trap, neuter, return (TNR) program that stabilizes feral cat populations, reduces birth rates and improves the overall health of feral cat colonies. TNR stabilizes feral cat populations and with the support of sympathetic neighborhood volunteers, the felines live safely and peacefully within their territory. Typical feral problems such as yowling females and spraying toms are practically eliminated. The incidence of disease and malnutrition are greatly reduced.